DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 073 075 SP 006 090

TITLE	Outline for the Educational Extension Program.
INSTITUTION	National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Task Force on Dissemination.
PUB DATE	Oct 72
NOTE	17p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Educational Programs; *Information Dissemination; Program Coordination; *Program Descriptions; Program Design; *Program Improvement; *Program Planning
IDENTIFIERS	*National Institute of Education

ABSTRACT

This paper traces the origins of the Educational Extension Program (EEP) in the Office of Education and presents a revised conception which reflects changes to adapt the EEP to the mission of the National Institute of Education (NIE). Following a discussion of the origin of EEP, emphasis is placed on the present concepts in NIE, design of policy issues, dependent variables, independent variables, design set in social systems theory, hypotheses, sampling design, implementation schedule, funding implications, and issues which remain to be resolved. (Author/MJM)

U S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.
EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

OCT 2 6 1972

Dissemination Task Force
October 13, 1972

ED 073075

Outline for the Educational Extension Program

Overview

This paper traces the origins of the Educational Extension Program (EEP) in the Office of Education and presents a revised conception which reflects changes designed to adapt the EEP to the mission of NIE.

Origins

The EEP represents a natural and logical extension of previous planning and operations of NCEC, extending back to FY 1966. ERIC was begun as the national education information retrieval and dissemination system. To this was added information analysis operations, computer searching, and generation of descriptive information about successful R&D outcomes and promising practices developed by schools. While these information resources were being generated; NCEC continued to review research on practitioners information using habits, both in education and in other fields. Results showed that practitioners generally:

. Prefer local, immediately available information, obtained through trusted channels, over high quality, but more distant, and less available information;

. Prefer interpersonal channels for communication over systems; and

. Value personal help in interpreting and applying results.

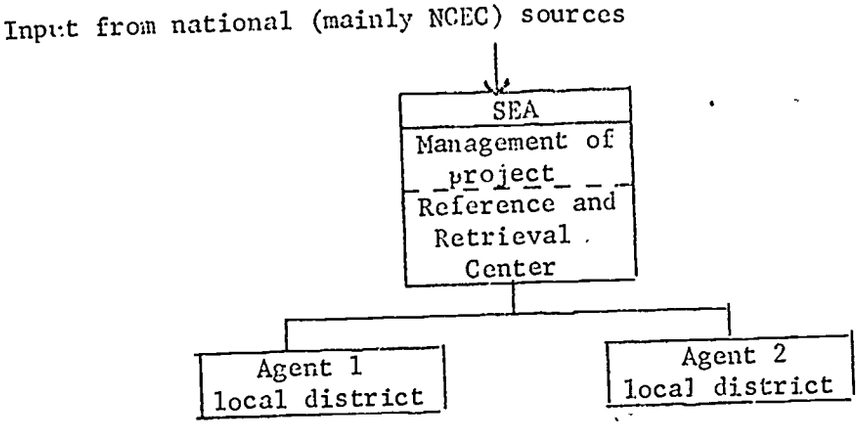
New dissemination plans, we were convinced, should include interpersonal linkage. Accordingly, NCEC commissioned a major review of dissemination models suited to education. The reports from this study, directed by Dr. Ronald Havelock, Center for Research on Utilization of Scientific Knowledge, University of Michigan, provided the conceptual basis for the EEP, and have also become widely-used training materials in university classes and among State and local groups.

Using Havelock's linkage model, NCEC enlisted a few State agencies in pilot testing of linkage concepts. Knowledgeable persons were asked to nominate State agencies believed to be interested, ready, and capable of assuming an expanded dissemination effort. In FY 1970 ten States were initially identified: five were asked to submit proposals; and three, South Carolina, Utah, and Oregon, were provided support. State agencies were chosen as the unit of operation because they could uniquely direct State-wide operations; implement and sustain funding of successful results; and because legal and societal changes were creating a stronger role for State-level leadership.

A relatively simple model guided implementation of the pilot State programs. It looked like this:

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

SP 006 670



The SEA program manager is responsible for all staffing and coordination within the State, while local agents provide personal linkage to educator colleagues. Agents focus on helping clients define problems or issues more precisely, translating the clients' concerns into searchable requests, requesting relevant information from the SEA reference center, screening the replies received to ensure their fit to the clients' needs, augmenting replies with relevant information from local sources, delivering, and as necessary, interpreting the results. Agents also arrange for followup help, often in the form of an SEA consultant or for visits to demonstration sites. Staff of the SEA reference center acquire, organize, and search information sources to provide fast responses to requests from agents. The reference center also answers questions received from educators in districts outside those served by agents.

The three pilot SEAs were free to determine how they would apply the model, hire and deploy staff, and establish cooperative arrangements with districts. However, all were subject to an independent, descriptive evaluation study, directed by Sam Sieber, Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University.

In addition, the Federal role included:

. Providing input necessary for the efficient operation of the reference centers, such as ERIC, reference tools, microfiche, and computer tapes; computer searching techniques; interpretative summaries, and descriptions of R&D outcomes and promising practices;

. Arranging for inservice training for staff development of persons in their various roles--managers, retrieval staff, and agents; and

. Disseminating results from the pilot States to the other States, through conferences, site visits, and distribution of printed information.

Evaluation results at the end of two years indicated the concepts were sound and useful results were being achieved. Affected State and district-level administrators had become strong supporters and had already begun to match Federal dollars in support. Key dissemination leaders from other States are ready to implement comparable programs.

Consequently, NCEC made expansion of the EEP its principle objective for FY 1973. The plan called for obligation of about $5.1 million for:

. Funding 20 States at an operational level, with reference and retrieval centers and a total of 80 to 85 agents;

. Providing planning grants to the remaining 30 States to allow them to prepare for implementing education extension operations in FY 1974; and

. Sustaining large-scale, but independent training and evaluation projects.

Transfer of the EEP from OE to NIE required rethinking the entire plan.

Present conception in NIE

The Dissemination Task Force has been reviewing previous planning for the EEP in an attempt to answer three questions:

. Are there reasonable alternatives to the previous conception?

. What kinds of hard, impact data should be available before any large scale implementation is started?

. Can at least limited cost/benefit data be generated on the relative outcomes of alternative extension-like programs?

As a result, the Dissemination Task Force now proposes an EEP which:

. Is cast in a field experiment setting, but with two limits (1) sampling for districts to receive agent services may have to be limited to about 20 States; and (2) parts of the total program may have to be left uncontrolled as an incentive to obtain and maintain SEA support to carryout the controlled portions;

. Will allow cost/benefit tests of several alternative methods of attempting information transfer under controlled conditions;

. Should provide considerable useful data and guidelines for implementation of alternative dissemination models by OE, NIE, SEAs, or other organizations several years hence; and

. Also will contribute advances in theory and method of measuring impacts of dissemination systems and suggest new hypotheses related to educational communication.

Assumptions

1. Useful current information, if known and effectively applied, can improve the results of educational decision-making, program development, and everyday operations. (Information includes R&D and evaluation reports, interpretative summaries, critical reviews, state of art reports, journal articles, descriptions of research-based materials and

innovative or promising practices, and lists of demonstration sites and consultants, etc.)

2. Local educators, school board members and others concerned with educational improvement are not aware of numerous improvements developed elsewhere which they could beneficially adapt or otherwise apply.

3. Information needs and requirements vary among different sets of actors in the educational system, as among teachers (even by school level and subject fields), principals, district staff, and school board members; hence, information must be selected, packaged and delivered in different ways.

4. Information delivery systems which have worked well in other fields can be adapted benefically to needs and resources within education.

5. Generally, interpersonal forms of delivery will result in a larger number of improvements, especially of a more complex and extensive variety.

6. However, because of their high labor costs, interpersonal linkage arrangements may not prove any more cost/beneficial than alternative and considerably less costly retrieval or dissemination arrangements.

7. SEAs are emerging as a key, pivotal linkage resource in American education, and, therefore, should be encouraged to assume a significant, management responsibility for implementing, operating, and extending dissemination services to local schools.

8. In fact, without SEA support, nationwide linkage systems will not develop effectively.

9. Once demonstrated, there will be sufficient demand for some, if not all, operations to support their continuation under State agency, professional organization, or commercial auspices.

10. The Federal role should primarily be to develop and test strategies, introduce continuous improvements, supply needed inputs from a national level (ERIC, etc.), support training of State and local staffs, and facilitate spread of successful dissemination practices, but not to operate the actual system or its main linkage or technical assistance components.

Design policy issues

Two major issues have to be resolved before further technical design questions can be pursued. These are:

1. The importance of adhering to OE's frequently reiterated commitment to support activities in 20 States versus developing a purely random design, based on local districts as sampling units and disregarding State boundaries and interests; and

2. What kind of extent of incentives do we need to provide States to obtain their cooperation and support for conducting the experiment.

On the first issue, if we were st. rting denovo, we could devise an elegant, experimental, random-block design, with levels of treatments varied within blocks--all based on local districts as sampling units. However, we arent starting from scratch: we have a four-year history of working toward strengthening SEA dissemination capabilities. In this process, NCEC has built up considerable trust and credibility with SEAs. These assets now are transferred to NIE. If we disregard State agencies now, we will lose credibility with potential significant constituency. There are positive reasons for adhering to previous plans to give States a significant role in the EEP. Their capabilities are developing fast. The EEP funds will become the catalyst to draw ESEA Title II, III, and V, handicapped, voc-ed, Federal administrative and State monies into dissemination services. States are uniquely positioned to implement favorable results of the EEP experiment, but will not be able or disposed to do so unless they have a significant role in the initial experiment. There is an immediate practical reason for restricting at least parts of the experiment to only certain States. Local agents have to be backed up by relatively sophisticated retrieval and reference centers. Such centers should not be located too far from their users, nor should they become impersonal mail-order, paper shuffling operations with a heavy overload and backlog of requests. Placement of reference centers within a State and development of personal connections with agents are necessary to ensure an adequate test of the extension services. The State centers, as outlined later, also will be used to provide the "retrieval only" treatment and to backup the "current awareness" treatment.

Still, we pay some kind of a price for restricting the agent portion of the experiment to about 20 States. Obviously, we depart from a national random selection of districts for treatment. However, this is not considered to be a serious weakness. With the number of districts or even sets of schools or census tracts within metropolitan areas to draw from, we can obtain sufficient randomization to ensure generalization of results to the 20 States involved. Most knowledgeable reviewers would probably concede that if there are sufficient replications of various sized districts within each treatment group, we can safely offer generalizations useful in comparable districts across the entire country.

The Dissemination Task Force recommends limiting the design in whatever ways necessary to ensure significant SEA participation.

On the issue of incentives for participation, the Dissemination Task Force recommends that each participating State be granted funds to allow the State to operate pilot tests of alternatives or adaptations of the larger EEP experiment. There is little incentive for State agencies

to simply monitor those segments of the overall, controlled experiment which happen to land in their States. In fact, developing coordination with local districts and collecting necessary data is a pain. Yet without SEA endorsement, the experiment could be jeopardized. NIE could propose a trade-off to SEAs: SEA guarantee cooperation, keep the treatments "pure" and aid in data collection in the experimental part of the EEP; for doing so, SEAs obtain some funds to carry out their own adaptations of one or more treatments included in the experiment. Their plans would have to be approved by NIE and outcomes would be assessed. In this way, NIE also benefits from being able to observe results of program variations which we could not anticipate now, but which might suggest important leads or hypotheses for future work.

At this time, however, we do not offer a specific ratio for relative support of the two components. Such a ratio would be better developed after more detailed cost estimates are developed for varying levels of the entire program.

The remainder of this paper deals with the experimental part of the EEP.

Dependent variables

In the pilot State operations, no variables were singled out as specific dependent variables. Consequently, any condition someone thought required improvement, became a dependent variable. These ranged from specific improvements of minute technique to formation of State wide policy. In contrast, in the EEP experiment, certain dependent variables must be clearly specified and measured in advance. Three sets of dependent variables have been identified:

. Policy deliberations and decision-making; across the entire district at the board level or from the office of the district superintendent; relating to issues such as management; finance; personnel recruitment, development, and deployment, curricular innovations, community relations, etc.

. Institutional and structural change; often based on explicit policy, but may not be; expressed in action, as developing an alternative school, using para-professionals, etc.

. Curriculum instructional improvements; substitutions of new approaches, materials, etc., for existing ones; seen primarily at the school building level or in the behavior of teachers.

Detailed work is required to further refine these dependent variables, identify others, and develop measurement theory and methods to determine the extent measured changes can be attributed to the intervention used. Dependent variables also have to be arrayed and measured in terms of complexity and extensiveness. Some changes will be minor, specific, localized, short-term, or otherwise limited by numbers affected; others will be major, district-wide, extensive, long term, and affect all students. Clearly, measurement of dependent variables has to reflect these conditions. A design study is proposed to provide solutions to these and other measurement questions.

Independent variables

Two classes of independent variables will be systematically varied:

. Form and type of delivery of selected current information matched to target audience needs; and

. Degree and type of interpersonal assistance provided for locating, interpreting, and applying information.

Form of type of delivery of information will include:

. Retrieval on demand only: a person requests a search, for example, from the State reference center and receives a package of abstracts of current reports, possibly with variation of conditions under which the full text of pertinent reports can be obtained--free or for a charge; in hardcopy or microfiche; possible free for fiche but charge for hardcopy;

. Recurring delivery of abstracts of selected current reports and journal articles (selective dissemination of information-sdi); perhaps with variations on frequency of delivery from weekly to monthly and variations on availability of full text (as above); and

. Recurring delivery of synthesized and interpretive summaries, probably on a monthly basis.

Form and type of delivery of information is based on the dichotomy between (1) having to request information, when in sufficient need, as opposed to receiving current information on a recurring cycle; and (2) by the form or content of the information supplied on the recurring cycle. The sdi form uses material exactly as received. Costs are for computer matches between new material and user "profiles," and for printing and mailing the materials. The interpretative summary form requires new intellectual effort, including analyses of current information in light of target audience needs, writing, editing, perhaps market testing for utility, printing and mailing. Obviously, the latter is more expensive. The question is: does the extra cost pay off, and for which, if any, particular audiences?

Degree and type of interpersonal assistance includes several comparisons: (1) between linking agents who are selected from those already inside the target district as opposed to outsiders recruited for or assigned to this new activity; and (2) agents who work full-time as professionals, in a new role, as opposed to individuals recruited into the role in a part-time capacity for one or two years.

Design set in social systems theory

Each school building, district level of organization, and school board represents a specific system social system. Persons, whom we will call actors, play certain roles, sets of behavior, which are prescribed by the values and norms of the system or subsystems with which the actors

and
identify/to which they usually belong. Actors have differential status in systems. Consequently, some are more influential in determining changes in the system.

For the EEP experiment, the question is which actors in local school systems are most critical in determining changes in the sets of dependent variables selected for study: (1) policy decisions; (2) institutional change; and (3) curricular-instructional improvements? The Dissemination Task Force believes that among the many groups attempting to make district-wide policies and affect institutional changes, two groups are pre-eminent--school board members and district superintendents and central office staff. At the curricular-instructional level, building principals and teachers stand out. Not included at this stage of planning are teacher associations or unions, the public, students, local business and commercial groups, community groups, citizen bodies, and mass-media gatekeepers. Only a limited number of groups can be included within the constraints of an experiment. We think the four groups named must be included. Others, possibly, could be added in subsequent years, as part of a larger or continuing experiment.

Table 1 shows the relationships, as now envisioned, by which form and type of delivery of information (independent variables) is expected to cause critical actors to alter ways of reaching policy decisions, the content of those decisions, and how they go about implementing instructional improvements (dependent variables).

Table 1. Array of independent variables, actors, and dependent variables

Independent variable	Actors	Dependent variable
All information forms (retrieval, sdi, interpretative summaries) Agents: full-time	School boards District superintendent and staff	Policy decisions
All information forms Agents: full-time	School boards District superintendents and staff	Institutional change
All information forms Agents: part-time and full-time	Building principles Teachers (including curriculum supervisors, other practitioners)	Curriculum-instructional improvement

Actually, two experiments are contained within the ECP experiment. One will compare the relative advantages and cost/benefit impacts of extending information and agent services to school board members and staff as compared to similar services to district superintendents and staff. The other will compare similar relative outcomes of services provided to building principals as compared with teachers and related instructional staff.

Several embellishments of each treatment by actor groups are also suggested as subexperimental tests.

Hypotheses

All hypotheses are presented in null form.

Policy-related hypotheses

1. There are no significant cost/benefit differences in impacts of on-demand retrieval services in the policy decisions reached by school board members as contrasted with district staff.

2. There are no significant cost/benefit differences in policy-decisions associated with receiving current information (sdi) between school board members and district staff.

3. There are no significant cost/benefit differences in policy decisions associated with receiving synthesized, interpreted information between school board members and district staff.

4. There are no significant cost/benefit differences in the impacts of the services of full-time extension agents in the policy decisions reached by school board members as contrasted with district staff.

5. There are no significant cost/benefit differences among the impacts of retrieval services, sdi, interpretive summaries, and service of agents on policy decisions on school boards.

6. There are no significant cost/benefit differences among the impacts of retrieval services, sdi, interpretative summaries, and services of agents on policy decisions of the district staff.

Institutional change related hypotheses

There are no significant cost/benefit differences related to institutional change as the dependent variable.

Curriculum-instructional improvement related hypotheses

1. There are no significant cost/benefit differences in the impacts of on-demand retrieval between building principals and teachers.

2. There are no significant cost/benefit differences in curricular-instructional improvements associated with receiving current information (sdi) between building principals and teachers.

3. There are no significant cost/benefit differences in curricular-instructional improvements associated with receiving interpretative summaries between principals and teachers.

4. There are no significant cost/benefit differences from the services of part-time extension agents on curricular-instructional improvements made by principals as contrasted with teachers.

5. There are no significant cost/benefit differences from the services of full-time extension agents on curricular-instructional improvements made by principals as contrasted with teachers.

6. There are no significant cost/benefit differences among the impacts of retrieval services, sdi, interpretive summaries, and services of part-time and full-time agents on the curricular-instructional improvements implemented by building principals.

7. There are no significant cost/benefit differences among the impacts of retrieval services, sdi, interpretative summaries and services of part-time and full-time agents on the curricular-instructional improvements implemented by teachers.

Several smaller low-cost, experiments can be easily incorporated in this broader design. These are not elaborated, but can be detected throughout the remainder of the paper. For example, we can test the impacts of various intervals, from perhaps weekly to monthly, in delivery sdi materials. We can also compare the utility of retrieval services only versus their combination with sdi and interpretative summaries. Another test may involve delivery of sdi and interpretative summaries to all professionals in buildings as contrasted with either principals or teachers. These additional tests can be run because of the: (1) low cost of the treatments per user; and (2) the large number of distinct actor groups from which random samples can be drawn--approximately the number of school buildings in the country.

Sampling design

Local districts, not States, become the sampling units for the experiments. (Still, State agencies remain essential for the management of retrieval centers, deployment of agents, monitoring of activities, and for assessment of impacts to determine what services will be adapted later for State-wide institutionalization). Development of the sampling design can proceed only after basic decisions have been made concerning the number of treatments to be offered to which actor groups. The sequence of decisions will include:

. Decisions on basic design (treatments by actor groups);

. Stratification of districts (by some weighted set of criteria to create several more homogeneous pools of districts for randomized assignment to control versus treatment/actor groups).

. Selection of districts to control versus one of the several treatments/actor groups within each stratification.

In schematic form, the main form of the experiment would assume the proportions shown in Table 2, following on the next page.

Table 2: Treatments by Target Groups

Target Group	T R E A T M E N T S						
	Control	Retrieval: From SEA Center	Retrieval: From National Sch. B. Center	sdi	Interpretative Summaries	Agents: Part-time Inside	Agents: Full-time
School boards (policy, institutional	x	x (where applicable)	x (for boards in States without SEA centers) (also test between relative utility of two sites for retrieval services)	x	x	x (NA=not applicable)	x
District superintendent and staff (policy, institutional change)	x	x	NA	x	x	NA	x
Building principles	x	x	NA	x	x	x	x
Curriculum supervisors, visiting teachers, etc.	x	x	NA	x	x	x	x
Teachers, counselors, aids, practitioners	x	x	NA	x	x	x	x

Within any one strata, some number of districts would be selected as control districts, would receive no treatment, and, depending on the details of the evaluation method used, would be the source of various levels of pre and post-test data. For control groups, experimental costs would be for data collection and analysis only. Data collection will require multi-year cooperation from the selected districts. SEA, AASA, national school and State board association endorsement should be assured before the design is frozen.

SEA retrieval services would be developed for two purposes: (1) to backup agents; but also (2) to provide a test of the cost/benefit utility of this approach alone versus other treatments (sdi, interpretative summaries, agent services) and versus its combination with sdi and interpretative summary treatments. To test appropriate hypotheses, data will be collected from control districts and districts selected to serve as test sites for each treatment. Thus, for some number of randomly selected districts, school boards will receive only SEA retrieval services in response to board requests; in other randomly selected districts, board members will receive sdi materials; in others only interpretative summaries; and still others, only agent services. In the latter, work loads of agents could be varied from one agent in one board in a large city to one agent to perhaps 10 to 15 boards in smaller cities and rural areas. Similarly, by random selection, other districts will be selected to provide tests of cost/benefit impacts of the treatments mediated through the district superintendent's offices, building principles or through teachers and other practitioners.

SEA retrieval services will not be expensive. Further, these centers at little additional cost, can provide the retrieval services treatment for all actor groups. We can also explore arrangements whereby an SEA center in one State could serve treatment districts in adjacent States. In this way we can extend the national representativeness and, therefore, generating of results.

The sdi services can also be offered at low unit cost to districts selected for this treatment within each actor group. Costs for profile development, computer searching, printing and mailing will be pro-rated over thousands of recipients.

Interpretative summary generation and delivery will bear a higher unit cost. However, as with sdi, the mechanics of distribution will be relatively simple once the districts are selected.

The agent treatment will be the most expensive part of the program, perhaps by a factor of 15 to 20 over retrieval services or sdi. For the policy and institutional change comparisons involving boards and district offices, only full-time agents are suggested. Both full and part-time agents are proposed for the tests of ways to induce curricular-instructional improvements. For the latter tests, at least twice the number of previous districts will be required. This should be possible because of the large number of buildings or clusters of buildings available for random selection--even within any conceivable stratification.

A special subtest is built into the set of school board treatments. We may also wish to test the preference toward and use by board members and staff of retrieval services available from their own SEA centers versus a more distant, national, but specialized school board information service. To accommodate this feature of the design, districts will have to be further randomly selected within each of some number of States to result in samples which: (1) will be control districts only; (2) be targets for SEA retrieval services only; and (3) be targets for national board services only. However, if anything has to go, this subtest might be the first to be dropped.

The complex assignment of treatments by actor groups will hold only for larger districts or combinations of smaller districts. In addition, we may wish to permit further tests of the original generalized service model in moderate and smaller districts. This question can only be resolved as we examine sampling unit details.

In addition, SEA should be allowed to test their own combinations of treatments in districts not included in any control or experimental cells--their incentive or reward for building cooperation for the experiment.

Simplification of the proposed model may be necessary. We may have too many treatments by actor groups in relation to potential random selection within each of several strata by type of district. (Funding limitations may require reduction also.) Only further analysis will tell. The following implementation procedures indicate how we propose resolving these issues.

Implementation schedule

The increased complexity of the EEP experimental design rules out one earlier option--to begin immediate implementation, through SEAs, shortly following availability of funds. Too much methodological work remains to be done, including specification of variables, development of measurements, developing a sample, and building cooperation among potentially affected organizations. Significant methodological questions require work by one or perhaps several highly qualified specialist teams. This will take time and precludes the option of providing SEAs planning money. Most of the detailed planning will have to be centralized. Besides, many SEAs are capable now of developing retrieval services and staffing for agent services: others can be provided needed technical assistance. Also, SEAs cannot proceed far until the national sample design is set. Fixing the sample design, however, will depend in part on which SEAs will be operating retrieval services. Taking these factors into consideration, we recommend the following implementation schedule:

October 27:	NIE response to this paper
November 17:	Report from outside evaluation and experimental design review panel

December 5: Report from the EEP Advisory Panel

December 15: NIE sets the basic design

December 22: RFP let for development of details of experimental design--specification and measurement of variables, stratification of districts, preparation for random assignment to treatment by target group combinations, etc.

December 22: Announcement to SEAs for proposals to participate in EEP experiment and, as incentive, to run their own variations

January 19: Meeting of SEA dissemination representatives to explain the EEP program

February 2: RFP let for training program for EEP staff

February 16: Award experimental design contract

February 23: Select States to participate; perhaps 20; will be clearer when the design is set; develop sample with experimental design contractor, work back and forth to fit sampling plan to State capabilities

March 16: Award training contract

March 16: Award grants to States: staff recruitment or deployment assured for later actions in June

June 1: All districts in the experiment assigned to a treatment by target combination; control districts identified; SEAs have obtained cooperation assurances from identified LEAs; contractor refines variables and measurement, prepares for Fall pretest data collection; SEAs begin training of staff to be deployed in various roles.

September 28: Staff in assigned roles; pretest data collected; EEP experiment begins; continuous data collection begun

Another set of activities designed to produce the sdi and interpretative summary materials should be begun simultaneously with the EEP schedule. The recommended schedule for these activities is:

December 22: Release RFP for user needs study to obtain information needed to develop user profiles for sdi for boards, district staff, curriculum supervisors, teachers and to identify priority topics for interpretative summaries

March 2: Award contract

June 15: Contractor reports on sdi profiles and interpretative summary ropics

July 1: NIE decides how to run its experimental sdi operation and how to generate interpretative summaries; first set of each due October for appropriate experimental groups

Funding implications

The Dissemintation Task Force has not attempted to estimate costs for each component of the experiment or for the total operation. Work is in progress on certain unit costs and can be provided after the general design is set. Now, however, NIE has a choice of heavier initial investment in FY-73 versus beginning the experiment now and holding off the heavier initial costs until FY-74.

Choice of heavier costs in FY-73. In this case, funds would be awarded to:

. Conduct design work and for at least the first year evaluation-data collection

. Support initial summer training and at least 12 months of further inservice training

. Cover full program costs, through SEAs, beginning April 6 and extending 1, 2 or 3 years.

. Conduct the research needed to produce sdi and interpretative summaries and fund for production of both for at least the first year of operation.

Choice of heavier costs in FY-74.

Under this option, SEA awards would be limited to the April through August or even December period, afterwhich the remaining 24 to 30 months could be funded in FY-74. Similarly, funding for producing the sdi materials and interpretative summaries could be split, with the first few months covered from FY-73 and the rest of the calendar year and even subsequent years from FY-74. Evaluation and training costs could be split also: cover only design, summer and fall work from FY-73, and beginning in December, for example, fund continuing work from FY-74. December is used on the assumption that NIE will have FY-74 funds by then and will not be under a continuing resolution.

Issues

A number of issues remain to be resolved. Those identified in the course of preparing this paper follow. Others undoubtedly will arise as discussions continue.

1. Is the design in the right direction? Do we agree on the treatments/actor groups and dependent variables?

2. Is the possible limitation by 20 States for at least the retrieval and agent components acceptable?

3. Do we agree SEAs should receive an incentive in the form of support to try their own approaches to dissemination?

4. Can NIE meet the time schedule outlined?

5. Which year, FY-73 versus FY-74, does NIE want to put the main cost burden? Can we be assured of sufficient funds if big costs are deferred to FY-74?

6. What should be the role of ERIC Clearinghouses in generating interpretative summaries versus having them prepared under a central contract or by various contractors?